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Topics & Goals

COMP 100 gives students a basic understanding of computer information systems, i.e., how to organize, access, and manipulate large collections of information in a productive manner. The course focuses on

- Databases -- using Microsoft Access 2010
- Spreadsheets -- using Microsoft Excel 2010

Database examples will mostly come from business. Spreadsheet examples will mostly comes from business and personal finance.

Students are not expected to have any prior experience with databases or spreadsheets. The course does not involve programming. Students are assumed to have basic computer skills of running programs, browsing the web, and accessing files.

At the end of the course, students should be able to pass the Microsoft Office Specialist Certification exams for Access and Excel. Those exams are not part of the course, however.

Workload

If you pay attention in class and spend about 3 hours a week on the assignments and project, you are almost guaranteed an A or B. However, each semester I typically have a few students who don't pay attention in class, skip some assignments, and don't put much effort into the project, and then struggle to earn a D.

Graded work

Assignments	Practical work with databases & spreadsheets	8, roughly weekly	Individually	35%
Quizzes	Conceptual work with databases & spreadsheets	8, roughly weekly	Individually	5%
Project	Large database project	3 deadlines during 2nd half	Individually or pairs	20%
Exams	Practical & conceptual work with databases & spreadsheets	3 during semester	Individually	40%

Assignments and Quizzes have the same deadlines. You should really consider each quiz to simply be part of the corresponding assignment. The difference is that the quizzes are graded by computer.

Extra credit is available only on the last milestone of the project.

Letter-grade cutoffs are 90/80/70/60 for A/B/C/D.

Honor Code Policy

Assignments and quizzes should be done individually, and the project should be done individually or with a partner. However, you may get help from other students and the course staff. You can also use any online or printed resources, except for solutions that you might find.

Exams should be done individually, although you may get help from the instructor. You can use any resources that are part of this course.

Late policy

You may request penalty-free extensions. Valid reasons include sickness, school-related travel, and adding the course late. Invalid reasons include forgetfulness and having too much work. Whenever possible, please request this ahead of time.

Otherwise, assignments may be turned in up to two days late with the following grade penalty:

- 0-24 hours late: -10 points (out of 100)
- 24-48 hours late: -20 points (out of 100)

Staff

Instructor:

- John Greiner, Duncan Hall 3093, 713-348-3838, greiner@, Office hours -- drop in or make an appointment. I have a flexible schedule, but MWF are usually best.

Graders (of assignments):

- Adeene Denton, cad3@
- Emily Liu, eyl2@
- Anna Ng, tn13@

Textbooks

	Comprehensive Edition		**Introductory Edition**
New Perspectives on Microsoft Office Access 2010	ISBN 13: 978-0538798471	**OR**	ISBN 13: 978-0538798488
New Perspectives on Microsoft Office Excel 2010	ISBN 13: 978-0538742917		ISBN 13: 978-0538742399

Choose either the traditional paper or the Kindle edition. Previous students have discrecommended the proprietary CourseSmart electronic version. Use the 2007 versions at your own risk as there are many small changes in both the exercises and text.

You should bring the relevant textbook to class each day. On some days, you'll need it, while on other days, you might find it helpful.